

§ 160A-685. Ferry Transportation Authority.

(a) Financial Accountability. – An Authority created under this Article is a public authority subject to the provisions of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes.

(b) Funds. – The establishment and operation of an Authority are governmental functions and constitute a public purpose. The State or any unit of local government may, but is not obligated to, appropriate funds to support the establishment and operation of the Authority. The State or any unit of local government may also dedicate, sell, convey, donate, or lease any of their interests in any property to the Authority. An Authority may apply for grants or any other type of financing from the State, the United States, or any department, agency, or instrumentality thereof.

(c) General Powers. – The general powers of the Authority include any one or more of the following:

- (1) To sue and be sued.
- (2) To have a seal.
- (3) To make rules and regulations, not inconsistent with this Article, for its organization and internal management.
- (4) To employ persons deemed necessary to carry out the functions and duties assigned to them by the Authority and to fix their compensation within the limit of available funds.
- (5) With the approval of the unit of local government's chief administrative official, to use officers, employees, agents, and facilities of the unit of local government for such purposes and upon such terms as may be mutually agreeable.
- (6) To retain and employ counsel, auditors, engineers, and private consultants on an annual salary, contract basis, or otherwise for rendering professional or technical services and advice.
- (7) To acquire, lease as lessee with or without option to purchase, hold, own, and use any property, real or personal, tangible or intangible, or any interest therein, and to sell, lease as lessor with or without option to purchase, transfer, or dispose thereof, whenever the same is no longer required for purposes of the Authority, or exchange same for other property or rights that are useful for the Authority's purposes, including, but not necessarily limited to, barge service, marine maintenance, ferry terminals, and parking facilities.
- (8) To acquire by gift, purchase, lease as lessee with or without option to purchase or otherwise to construct, improve, maintain, repair, operate, or administer any component parts of a ferry transportation system or to contract for the maintenance, operation, or administration thereof, or to lease as lessor the same for maintenance, operation, or administration by private parties, including, but not necessarily limited to, barge service, marine maintenance, ferry terminals, and parking facilities.
- (9) To accept gifts or grants of money, real or personal property, or services from a person, the State, the federal government, or a unit of local government.
- (10) To make or enter into contracts, agreements, deeds, leases with or without option to purchase, conveyances or other instruments, including contracts and agreements with the United States, the State of North Carolina, and units of local government.
- (11) To purchase or finance real or personal property in the manner provided for cities and counties under G.S. 160A-20.

- (12) To surrender to the State of North Carolina, upon the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Administration, any property no longer required by the Authority.
- (13) To develop and make data, plans, information, surveys, and studies within the service area of the Authority and to prepare and make recommendations in regard thereto.
- (14) To enter in a reasonable manner lands, waters, or premises for the purpose of making surveys, soundings, drillings, and examinations whereby such entry shall not be deemed a trespass except that the Authority shall be liable for any actual and consequential damages resulting from such entries.
- (15) To make, enter into, and perform contracts with private parties and transportation companies with respect to the management and operation of ferry transportation services.
- (16) To make, enter into, and perform contracts with other entities for the joint use of property or rights, for the establishment of connecting routes, joint fares, or transfer of passengers.
- (17) To make, enter into, and perform agreements with governmental entities for payments to the Authority for the transportation of persons for whom the governmental entities desire transportation.
- (18) With the consent of the unit of local government that would otherwise have jurisdiction to exercise the powers enumerated in this subdivision, to issue certificates of public convenience and necessity, and to grant franchises and enter into franchise agreements, and in all respects to regulate the operation of ferries, buses, trams, taxicabs, and other methods of public passenger transportation that originate and terminate within the service area of the Authority as fully as the unit of local government is now or hereafter empowered to do within the jurisdiction of the unit of local government.
- (19) To operate a ferry transportation system and to enter into and perform contracts to provide and operate ferry transportation services and facilities, and to own or lease property, facilities, and equipment necessary or convenient therefor, and to rent, lease, or otherwise sell the right to do so to any person, public or private; further, to obtain grants, loans, and assistance from the United States, the State of North Carolina, any public body, or any private source whatsoever, but may not operate or contract for the operation of a ferry transportation system outside the service area of the Authority.
- (20) To enter into and perform contracts and agreements with other public transportation authorities, regional public transportation authorities, or units of local government pursuant to the provisions of Part 1 of Article 20 of this Chapter; further, to enter into contracts and agreements with private transportation companies, but this subdivision does not authorize the operation of, or contracting for the operation of, service of a ferry transportation system outside the service area of the Authority.
- (21) To operate public transportation systems extending service into any political subdivision of the State of North Carolina, unless a particular unit of local government operating its own public transportation system or franchising the operation of a public transportation system by majority vote of its governing board shall deny consent, but such service may not extend more than 10 miles outside of the service area of the Authority.
- (22) To do all things necessary or convenient to carry out its purpose and to exercise the powers granted to the Authority.

- (23) To facilitate the coordination of transportation plans in the service area.
- (24) To maintain databases for the projection of future travel demands in the service area.
- (25) To provide other transportation related services within the service area of the Authority, as determined by the Board of Trustees in its discretion.
- (26) To contract for, or to provide and maintain, with respect to the facilities and property owned, leased, operated, or under the control of the Authority, and within the service area thereof, a security force to protect persons and property, dispense unlawful or dangerous assemblages and assemblages that obstruct full and free passage, control pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and otherwise preserve and protect the public peace, health, and safety. A member of the security force shall be a peace officer and, as such, shall have authority equivalent to the authority of a police officer of the city or county in which the member is discharging those duties.
- (27) Except as restricted by covenants in bonds, notes, or equipment trust certificates, to set in its sole discretion rates, fees, and charges for use of its ferry transportation system.
- (28) To issue bonds and bond anticipation notes under the Local Government Revenue Bond Act, Articles 5 and 9 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes, or as otherwise provided by law, for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, improving, maintaining, operating, or financing a ferry transportation system or any part thereof and to refund, whether or not in advance of maturity or the earliest redemption date, any such bonds or notes. As provided in G.S. 159-94, the principal of and interest on the bond is payable solely from the revenues pledged to its payment and neither the State nor the municipality is obligated to pay the principal or interest, except from such revenues. (2017-120, s. 1.)